

Printed by J. Baker at the Black-Boy in Pater-noster-row. 1715.

REASONS

Humbly offer'd to the

PARLIAMENT

FOR

Abrogating the Observation

OF THE

Thirtieth of January.

*Behold, ye fast for Strife and Debate, and
to smite with the Fist of Wickedness;
ye shall not fast as ye do THIS DAY,
to make your Voice to be heard on
high.— Wilt thou call this a Fast, and
an acceptable Day to the Lord? Isa. lviii.
4, 5.*

*When ye come to appear before me, who
hath required this at your Hand? —
Chap. i. 12.*

L O N D O N :

Printed, and sold by J. Baker, at the
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REASONS

Humbly offered to the

PARLIAMENT

FOR

Allegating the Opposition

OF THE

Thirtieth of January.

Behold, ye say for Life and Death, and
to hate with the life of wickedness;
ye shall not fall away do THIS DAY,
to make your voice to be heard on
high. — Will thou call this a fall, and
an acceptable day to the Lord? Mal. iii.

As 5.
When ye come to appear before me, says
I have required that of your hands. —
Chap. i. 12.

L O N D O N :

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REASONS

FOR

Abrogating the Observation

OF THE

Thirtieth of January.

HE late Escape from the impending Storm that hover'd over this Kingdom, may justly fill all sober and considerate Persons with the highest Repentment of the insolent Attempts of a daring and profligate Party, and with Indignation

dignation against the restless Contrivers of such a Villany; the Discovery of which rais'd those Preturbations in her late Majesty's royal Breast, that the Surplusage of Sorrow she conceiv'd at the base Ingratitude of that Faction, press'd out her generous Soul, and sunk her Body into the dark Recesses of a Tomb. And as it may justly raise our utmost Indignation against that bold and daring, that restless and perfidious Party, so may it furnish us with Matter of the greatest Wonder and Amazement, that so small and inconsiderable Number of Men, and those too for the most Part of as desperate Fortunes, as vicious Lives, should dare engage in such an extraordinary Undertaking; or that having carry'd it on to the very *CRISIS*, that nothing was wanting but the finishing Stroke, to involve us in perpetual Misery and hereditary Bondage, that then their Design should prove abortive, the Snare should be broken, and we escape, by the happy Accession of our most illustrious Deliverer, and they should meet with an entire Disappointment and Defeat.

THIS indeed might seem past Belief, and an Attempt that after Ages will scarcely credit, were it not that this is not the first Attack that has been made on *British*

tish Liberty, by that insolent Tribe, nor the first Time they have been baffled and disappointed.

WE need not look back so far as thirty Years, for an Instance of both; the glorious Revolution under K. *William* of immortal Memory, is a standing Monument of their perfidious and restless Attempts, and of our Deliverance and Escape. So that we may boldly say, Heaven has watched over this Clan to confound their wicked Devices, and over this Nation for its Preservation: And whilst the Almighty's Arm is thus stretch'd out for our Defence, the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against us.

THUS are we by a surprizing Providence, rescu'd from the most imminent Dangers, and our Fears being dissipated, we see our selves preserv'd in a State of Liberty and Property, and entring into a most glorious and happy Condition, if we are not wanting to our selves. Thus far Heaven has done its Part towards our future Happiness; and now it lies upon us to improve the Golden Opportunity that is put into our Hands. This once slippt, may prove irretrievable, and be lost for ever. Let us then, as we are *Britons*, exert the antient and truly noble Spirit of
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our Progenitors, and with the greatest Application set our selves to the healing of a divided and distracted Nation, by removing every Thing that may give an Opportunity to uneasie and designing Spirits to molest and trouble us. Let Animosities and Divisions be for ever banish'd from amongst us, and the very Memory of them deleted, by abolishing whatsoever may revive our former Feuds, or imbitter and aggravate the Minds of Men one against another.

AMONGST the many pernicious Methods taken, either by our secret or open Enemies to weaken and divide us; amongst the many Bones of Contention, that have been flung amongst us, to set us together by the Ears, I know of none that have been better calculated for their destructive Aims, or that have prov'd more effectual to their Diabolical Designs, or been more industriously improv'd, than the Commemoration of our civil Broils, and the Death of that unhappy Prince K. Charles I. the Memory of which is perpetuated to us and our Children by the Observation of that Day whereon the King was executed; and being enjoin'd by a Law, as it has been hitherto an opening of our bleeding Wounds, so by the Continuance thereof must prove
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by a fatal Necessity the Cause of Disqui-
etude and Divisions to our latest Posterity :
Now, if the Celebration of this Fast, has
been to us, and is like to be to our Children
a Root of Wrath and Bitterness, this
would be a sufficient Reason, tho' no
other could be laid down, for the abro-
gating thereof.

NOR can any suggest, that the re-
pealing of that Act which enjoins its Ob-
servation, would either be a Reflection on
the Family of the *Stuarts*, or upon the
Wisdom of the Parliament by whom it
was enjoin'd : And I am apt to think,
that if that august Body could have fore-
seen, what ill Uses would have been made
of it, or that it would have been the Oc-
casion of so much Distraction amongst the
People in after Ages, they would never
have enacted the Observation of that un-
happy Day. Nor does it follow, as a ne-
cessary Consequence, that whatsoever is
done by a Parliament, is therefore well
done, for if so, how comes one Parliament
to act diametrically opposite to another, and
rescind those Laws that have been enact-
ed by their Predecessors? *Humanum est*
errare ; and why not in political Bodies,
as well as particular Persons? Besides,
Times and Circumstances change, and
these being alter'd, make a vast Alterati-
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on in Things too, so that what was of absolute Necessity and advantageous at one Time, may become detrimental at another.

I cannot believe any Man so void of Sense as to assert, That the Observation of this Day is any ways advantageous either to Church or State, unless some blear-ey'd Bigots of a Party, who always look ascant to their particular Humours rather than the Interest of the whole; but if any such there be, they would mightily oblige the World, in making it appear wherein such Advantage does consist, and for ever after he that shall perform this Task, *Erit mihi magnus Apollo.*

BUT waving, That the Observation of this Day, never has been, nor can possibly be, any ways serviceable or advantageous to this Kingdom, or that Part of it call'd *England* in particular, the first Reason that I shall offer, for the abrogating of its Observation is this,

I. That it has been, and still continues to be pernicious to this Kingdom, as it is the Occasion of Animosities and Divisions amongst us.

TO endeavour to prove this, would be lighting a Candle to see the Sun in his Meridian Lustre, whether we consider it in regard to the Influence it has on Conversation, or to the Manner of its Observation. On this Day the Coals of Contention are blown up into a Flame, the bloody Flag of Defiance is hung out, and the bitterest Invectives furnish Matter for an Hour's Discourse; the Gospel of Peace is turn'd into an Alarm of War, *Bella rostra sonant*; and thus our Saviour's Prophecy is fulfill'd, *I came not to send Peace, but a Sword*. The cloven Tongues of Dissention appear then publickly in every fiery Zealot; and tho' the Tongue it self is but a small Member, yet *then especially, it boasteth great Things, and appears to be an unruly Evil, full of deadly Poison*, casting forth the pernicious Arrows and Darts of Calumny, full of the Rust of Malice and Inveteracy; then it is that it truly appears to be a *World of Iniquity, to be a Fire that setteth on Fire the Course of Nature, whilst it self is set on Fire of Hell*. With what Rancour and Malice do their Sermons then abound? How are inconsistent Things then jumbled together? *Out of the same Mouth proceed Blessing and Cursing*; and that Tongue which the one Moment is employ'd in praying to God

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for Mercies, or blessing for those bestow'd, in the next, is converted to Railery and Curses against their Fellow-Creatures; and right or wrong, no Matter for that, the poor Dissenters are charg'd with, and anathematiz'd for the Murder of the King, tho' born long enough after the Perpetration thereof: So true is that of the Apostle, *Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we Man, who is made after the Similitude of God*; and certainly the Inference is very rational, *My Brethren, these Things ought not so to be.*

ON this Day it is, that Matters are magnify'd beyond the real Truth, and every little insignificant *Domine*, tho' he scarce ever read the smallest Tract relating to those Affairs, and is in a Manner, as ignorant of them as the Timber into which he is mounted, will yet there, where he is sure to meet with no Opponent, exert himself in all the *Bilingsgate* Rhetorick that he is Master of, to blacken the Schismaticks (as he is pleas'd to call them) from the Church of *England*: And whatever in his narrow Judgment he imagines a Fault, shall be sure to be laid to their Charge. The *Pious Martyr*, and the *Horrible Rebellion* (as 'tis stil'd) must be expos'd to the deluded Populace, thro' a magnifying Glass, and a multiplying one too.

too. But my Intent here, is not to enquire into the Merits of the Cause, and therefore I shall forbear enlarging on that Point.

HENCE the Auditory return home full of that Malice and Rage, which they have imbib'd from the Pulpit, and with as much Judgment as the Dogmatical Parson, their Institutor, fall foul on their Neighbours, dissenting from the Church of *England*; and yet it is easy to be observ'd, that these Lay-Zealots, if enquir'd into, can give as little Reason for their own Conformity, as they can for the others dissenting. But the *Parson* has told them, *That they are rebellious Schismatics, and the Spawn of 41; that they are of Antimonarchical Principles, republican, King-killing Hereticks, whose flagitious Predecessors murder'd the most glorious Martyr on this Day, who laid down his Life in Imitation of his blessed Saviour in the Defence of the Church, and that the Church is establish'd by Law; and that's enough! nay, so ignorant are they of the State of the Christian Religion abroad in the World, and our own Constitution at home, that they look on all the reform'd Churches in Scotland, and foreign Parts, to be Schismatics for differing from the Church of England, as tho' she had a Right to universal Headship, and all other Nations and Churches were to submit to the Judgment*

ment and Authority thereof: And all this because the *Parson* tells 'em from the Pulpit, as well as the *Act of Uniformity* enacted in the Reign of *Edward VI.* that the *Church* is truly Apostolical in respect of Government and Ceremonies, as well as Doctrine: Yet could I never meet with any Person amongst the greatest Sticklers for *Prelacy*, that could prove one Diocesan Bishop for some Centuries after the Apostles Days: Nor can I, after strictest Enquiry meet with the least Notice of the Vestments, or any Scraps of the Liturgy, that were us'd by them or the primitive Christians for many Ages after the first Plantation of Christianity. And tho' the hottest Ceremony-Monger that ever yet appear'd on the *British* Isle, durst never affirm, that these Things are of Divine Institution, yet our High-flyers are resolv'd, *aliquo modo*, to maintain these Traditions of the Fathers, not out of any Respect or Esteem they have either for the one or the other, but as *Judas* follow'd Christ for the Bag, and would with him give their Master the Bag too, for better Profit; yet they are more violent for these Circumstantials than for the Essentials of Religion; that so they may engross to themselves that Power and Riches which they want merit to deserve. And therefore

fore on this their principal Market-Day, they bestir themselves to the utmost, to blacken all but their own Party, with those Names of Antimonarchical and republican Schismatics, to the enraging and dividing of the People, who being apt Scholars, and ready to improve in the worst Lessons, are thus set on Fire, raging at and reviling one another, with all the Names of Odium and Distinction they can invent; so that Brotherly Love, which by the Apostolical Injunction should continue, is quite discarded, and Hatred, Malice, evil-speaking and reviling, Wrath and Backbiting are only to be found amongst us, forgetting that good Premotion, which carries as well as the Stamp of Divine Authority, its Proof in the very Front, *That if we bite and devour one another, we shall be devoured one of another.* Nor can I see any Way, whereby this Flame can be extinguish'd, but by the Interposition of Publick Authority, and the Removal of this Occasion of Scandal out of the Way.

AS it was far from my Intent, so I hope no sober, judicious or unprejudiced Person will believe, that by what I have said, my Design was any Ways to cast Dirt on the *Church of England*; for I solemnly declare, my Aim herein, was only
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to expose the pernicious Practice of a Set of Men, who if they are a Part, are but a rotten Part thereof, and Disturbers of the Church, as well as of the State, who are either ignorant of, or averse to the great Duty of Christian Charity, which obliges them to follow Peace with all Men; nor are they more loyal (notwithstanding their specious Pretences and loud Clamours) to their King, or obedient to the Laws of the Land, than they are dutiful to their God, or charitable to their Neighbours. And this leads me to another Argument, *viz.*

II. That the Law which enjoins the Observation of this Day, is inconsistent with, and directly repugnant to the Act of Oblivion.

IF the keeping of a Day of Humiliation annually, for the putting the King to Death, and that for ever, and if prescribing Forms of Prayer, with Lessons for that Day, be not the most proper Method to perpetuate the Remembrance thereof, I can't conceive what is: If the proclaiming of a Fast, and calling a solemn Assembly, by a Law; the bowing down of our Heads like a Bulrush, and confessing of Guilt, be a Way to delete the Memory of the Action, then will I readily confess, that Contradictions may be

be reconcil'd, and Antipathies united in the strictest Amity.

IF an Act of Oblivion comprehends no more than barely a Pardon of foregoing Offences, or if it does not include an *altum silentium* of whatsoever has been before transacted, I must conclude myself wholly in the dark as to the meaning thereof, and will never for the future believe that Words are significant, or can comprehend our Meaning, and convey it to another. If these two are not a flat Contradiction to each other, to *Remember* and yet *Forget*, and to common Sense too, the World must be infinitely oblig'd to those, who can discover what is. A Thing so self apparent can admit of no Dispute, and 'twould confess a Weakness to attempt it. Were it not for the reviving the Memory of Things on this Day, to which the Clergy are obligated, not only in the Prayers prescrib'd for the Service of the Day, but in their Sermons also and Discourses for that Solemnity, the greatest Part of the Populace, whose Mouths are shut by the Act of Oblivion, tho' in vain, whilst the Priest's is open, wou'd by this Time, after so many Years, have been in a great Measure, if not altogether as ignorant, that any such Thing had been transacted on the Stage of *England*,

land, as they are of the Act of Oblivion. Is it rational, that the Laity shall be punishable for reflecting on, or upbraiding each other for, or with the Transactions of those Times? Shall they be oblig'd to a perpetual Silence, in Order to an eternal Oblivion, and yet at the same Time their Memories refresh'd by an anniversary *Fast*, and the Clergy forc'd to entertain their Audience with Discourses upon these Things? Let every rational Man judge, if this is not as diametrically opposite as Light and Darkness, as Good and Evil, as Life and Death; or if this be not building up with one Hand, and pulling down with the other, an uniting and a dividing of the People. Does not the very Observation of the Day, revive the Cause, and put the ignorant naturally upon an Enquiry thereinto? or what is the Tendency of a Commemoration, but the giving the Lie to an Oblivion? And it has been found all along by woful Experience, that upon Enquiry, those who have known any thing, tho' very imperfectly, have been ready to inform the rest, and that with as much Heat and Raillery as they receive it from the Clergy, who believing it to be the readiest Way to Preferment, and to please the Court, whilst the Family of the *Stewarts* was on the Throne, never fail'd to thunder out
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from the Pulpit, their Sermons stuf't with such Expressions, as may make any modest Ears to tingle. And this shall serve for another Reason for the abolishing this *Fast*, viz.

III. *THAT the Celebration of this Day is the Occasion of many indecent, unchristian, and blasphemous Expressions.*

HOW often may we hear, or rather what else do we hear on this Day, but the most bitter Invectives and virulent Reflections? Can such Language be decent in the Pulpit, or is it suitable to the Gospel of Peace? We have already instanc'd in a former Head of what Stuff these Discourses are usually compos'd; and can these Services be acceptable to God, or instructive to the People, in that Duty which they owe the supreme Majesty of Heaven? Or can it promote their spiritual Weal and eternal Happiness? But as if these wild Excursions were too few, or short of the intended Aim, some have not scrupled to equalize the Murder of that unhappy Prince, with that of our Saviour by the *Jews*; asserting the Guilt of one to be little, if any way short of the other, and that no Sin since the Creation is of so black a Dye: Be astonish'd, O ye *Heavens at this, and be ye horribly afraid;*

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shall a mortal and sinful Man, or any Thing that he can do, be brought in Competition or Comparison with his Maker ? 'Tis amazing how Men, endow'd with Reason, especially those of the black Robe, who are Teachers of others, should be either so audacious or ignorant, as to vent such blasphemous Expressions ; or that divine Justice does not seize the Wretches, whilst the Words are in their very Mouths, and make them standing Monuments of his eternal Wrath and Vengeance. *But because Sentence against an Evil Doer is not executed speedily, therefore the Hearts of these Men are fully set in them to do Wickedness,* forgetting that the Long-suffering and Patience of God should lead them to Repentance. But leaving these bold and impious, these flagrant and blaspheming Wretches to Divine Justice, whose Hands will be found at last of Iron, tho' at present his Feet are Lead ; I shall proceed to another Reason, which is this :

IV. *THAT the King's Death is (on that Day especially) unjustly charged upon the Protestant Dissenters.*

HERE I find my self immediately stopp'd in the very Threshold, with this Interrogation, *Quorsum hoc ?* How comes this
this

this to be an Argument for the abrogating the Observation of the 30th of *January*: Whilst another more bluntly steps in with a Challenge; *Durst you deny, that the Presbyterians cut off the King's Head?* To both these in a few Words:

TO the first of these I answer, That such a Charge thus aggravated, and yet entirely false, thrown upon so considerable a Part of the Nation, continued down to Posterity from Generation to Generation, whereby the Breaches, that are too wide already, are made much wider, the Means of reconciling the contending Parties rendred more difficult, and all Hopes of effecting it taken away, and the Observation of this Day being made a Pretext for continuing this false Imputation; upon the whole, I lay it down as an undeniable Truth, *That it is the Cause of publick Scandal and Offence, whereby a Third Part of the Kingdom at least, exclusive of Scotland, in Number, Trade and Riches, are rendred odious to, and disgusted by the Government.*

AND thus I think it very plainly appears to be a Reason for the abrogating that Day, especially if we prove it false, as I shall endeavour to do in Answer to my Second Antagonist, who confronts

me with this Query, *Will you deny that the Presbyterians cut off the Kings Head?* I answer, Yes, I do deny it; and though according to School-Rules, no Man is oblig'd to prove a Negative, for *asserenti incumbit Probatio*; yet for once I will try what I can do, and at the same time challenge him to make good the Affirmative.

TO proceed then, allowing some or those Persons, who had an Hand in the King's Death, were Dissenters, which is more than any Man as yet ever made appear, yet the Act of a few Men of a Persuasion cannot be charg'd upon the whole, unless a Commission could have been prov'd from them for such Proceedings, or at least a *probatum* after it was acted; and to assert either of these is altogether ridiculous. I believe that Party would be ready to flie in any Man's Face, that should lay the horrid *Assassination-Plot* contriv'd in the Reign of our late Glorious Deliverer King *WILLIAM*, of immortal Memory, upon the Church of *England*; and the whole Body of that Community would have just Reason to resent it; nay, was it only thrown in the Dish of the whole *High-Church* Party, though this would be no more than breaking to them their own Bread, they would never

ver brook it ; and yet that Fact wanted Nothing but Success to have made it Canonical *Jure Divino*, amongst the whole Clan ; and I dare affirm that Action, so mean and villainous as it was, to surprize a Man by Ambuscade, and at unawares, whom they dare not look in the Face, when provided to receive them in the Field, so base, that the greatest Coward would be asham'd to own it, yet this Action I say was better and more universally approv'd off by them, as appears by their After-Actions and Toasts, and particularly a *Health to Sorril*, which none of the High Faction ever refus'd, and was a sort of standing Test amongst them, more than ever the other was approv'd off by the Body of the Dissenters.

BUT here the *Calves-Head* Club is presently flapt in the Dissenters Teeth. A poor Shift indeed ! Because a small and contemptible Number of Men uphold that base and inhumane Festival, it must of Necessity be an Act of the Dissenters, tho' in general they abhor it : But it seems the burning of the stunk Calf in the Borough, upon a 30th of *January* being a Market-Day, and according to Law, was a damnable *Presbyterian-Plot* against the Queen and Government, and *High-Church* made the poor Flesh-tasters pay for it, upon

on the Information of their trusty Knight the *Fishmonger*, a Man so well-qualify'd for an Evidence, that in his common Conversation rather than not oblige his Companions will swear to any Thing. But Sirs, would not a Prosecution of any of this High-flying Party, for taking the aforesaid Test, I mean the *Health to Sorril*, or any other of their new-minted Healths to *Perkin*, whose Interest for some Years last past has been publicly own'd and defended by them with Impunity, I say, would not a Prosecution on this Score have been thought by them an insufferable Persecution? And would *not the Church have been hereby in Danger*? But now my Hand is in, I don't much care if I tell the Publick, that I have known some, that never frequented a Meeting, unless to disturb it, and therefore in the Judgment of Charity no *Presbyterians*; nor yet were they accounted *Papists*, for they came often to the Parish-Church; nor could they be thought *Low-Church-Men*, for they would sometimes go to a *Non-juring* Conventicle, could swear, curse, drink, whore, and would never refuse a Glass to *Perkin*, and therefore past Contradiction were true Sons of *High-Church*; yet these Men could help make up a 30th of *January Club*, and desire a Bit next the Hatchet, as well as the best of 'em, unless

less common Report has bely'd them ; and yet we generally hold that for Truth, which every one says : But 'tis hoped, that those, who have been guilty of that rascally Practice, of what Denomination soever, will for the future be wiser, and give no farther Offence on that Score.

BUT to proceed, after so long a Digression, I shall lay this down for a second Reason, why this Fact cannot be charg'd upon the Dissenters. When that Parliament first conven'd, there was not to be found amongst the whole House of Commons, so many Dissenters, as amounted to the fourth part of the Number of the King's Judges, who were for the most part, if not all, chosen out of the Members of the House ; and this brings me to another Reason for the abrogating this Day ; viz.

V. *THAT the putting the King to Death was neither a National, nor Parliamentary Act.*

THIS I think will be less difficult than the former to make out : And I shall only offer this to prove it not a National Act : That more Persons appear'd on the King's part in Arms, than on the Parliament's. 'Tis certain, that the King's Forces were

were more numerous for a long Time, and the War was carry'd on, tho' with various Success, yet with Abundance of Vigour on both Sides, for several Years ; and after the King's Affairs declin'd, the Reasons of which, to Humane View, seems to have been Remissness in Discipline and Want of Pay, many bold and vigorous Attempts were made to retrieve them, tho' fruitless and unsuccessful : All which put together is as good as a Thousand Witnesses, that the Nation did not concur therein, no nor all those that serv'd under the Parliament against the King : Witness the Lord *Thomas Fairfax*, who perceiving the Drift of the *Juncto*, who were both Senators and Soldiers, and finding that his Authority over them, as General, was dwindled into an empty Title and Complement, under the Colour of which they intended to compass their Designs, resign'd his Commission and withdrew : Nay, so far was it from being a National Act, that but a few, very few of the Commons themselves did agree thereto, and therefore as it was not a National, so neither was it a Parliamentary Act. To have made it an Act of the Parliament, 'twas absolutely necessary and inseparable from the Nature of the Thing, that both Houses should have concurr'd there-

thereto ; but before this, the House of Lords was voted useleſs, and thereby one part being deſtroy'd, the other ceaſ'd to be a Parliament: And as the Honourable Houſe of Lords was laid aſide, ſo the Houſe of Commons had in a great meaſure ſhar'd the ſame Fortunes ; for that Honourable Houſe having been reform'd, as they were pleas'd to call it, was reduc'd in Number as well as Quality, far below the Dignity of that Auguſt Body ; and therefore could not be call'd ſo much as an Houſe of Commons, much leſs a Parliament ; but were in Reality a *Juncto*, who aſſum'd to themſelves a Power and Authority they had no Right to, which was maintain'd by ſome eminent and popular Commanders of the Army, 'till the *Juncto* had ſerv'd their Turn ; and having for ſome Time been over-aw'd by them, they were at laſt ſent packing with as much Contempt and Indignity as poſſibly could be thrown upon them, not by any Appearance of Legal Procedure, but open Violence : Thus have I given a ſuccinct Account of theſe Things, ſo far as they relate to this Head ; but ſuch Perſons as deſire to be better ſatiſfied in theſe Points, may be fully inform'd in ſeveral Books publiſh'd on thoſe Tranſactions, but eſpecially in my Lord Clarendon's Writings ; who is ſo far from Suspicion of
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being a Party-Author for the Parliament, that 'tis notorious to all the World, how strenuously he espous'd the King's Interest, and ventur'd both his Life and Fortunes in his Service.

NOW the keeping a Day of Humiliation on, this Account, is nothing better than transferring the Guilt, and consequently the Odium thereof, from a few Persons to the Publick, which, if unfair and detrimental towards smaller Communities, can never be advantageous to a Nation. Had it been an Act of the Parliament, or but of the House of Commons, it might have been said with some Colour of Reason to be National, and then a National Humiliation might have been plausible, but how odd a Story is it, to see a Congregation in the Presence of the Heart-searching God, with a downright Lie in their Mouths, confessing their Guilt, and the Guilt of their Fathers, tho' their Fathers had neither Heart nor Hand in it : And they themselves were either not born, nor begotten, or at least were not at Years of Discretion, or had Ability to have any Thing to do therein : And this again opens the Door to another Reason ; *viz.*

VI. *That*

VI. *THAT, that Generation is quite worn out, in whose Days the King was put to Death; and the Sons of many of those Persons, who were engag'd against the King in the Service of the Parliament, are of quite different Sentiments from their Fathers.*

IT would be needless to prove a Thing so self-evident, it being almost Seventy Years since the King suffer'd Death, and to perpetuate it from Generation to Generation is but rubbing of an old Sore, to no Purpose, or else to a very bad one, namely to divide the Commonalty. 'Tis true, Fathers beget Children in their own Likeness, but they beget not Souls, much less Opinions. And as the Children, that have been born since those unhappy Broils, could not inform or influence their Fathers, who had an Hand in those Transactions, so neither is it a necessary Consequence, because the Fathers were in that Interest, that their Sons approve their Doings, nothing being more common than for some of the best of Men to have such Children, as are sufficient Cause of Grief and Discredit to their Parents, and so *vice versa*. But before I leave this Head, I cannot but take Notice, that as an Obligation to own Guilt is very ungrateful to

the guilty themselves, so it must needs grate hard upon the Minds of generous Persons, to be either twitted with, or forc'd to confess the Miscarriages of their Progenitors. And as it bears hard upon the Childrens Spirits, so to invoke God's Mercy to avert his Judgments from the Children for the Sins of the Fathers, reflects upon the Veracity of God; who reasoning with the *Israelites* by the Prophet, for using that Proverb, *The Fathers have eaten sower Grapes, and the Childrens Teeth are set on Edge*; whereby they intimated, that God was unjust in his Dealings, and they were punish'd for their Fathers Sins; He thus expostulates with them, *What mean ye, that you use this Proverb? And then subjoins with an Oath, As I live saith the Lord, you shall no more use this Proverb; the Son shall not bear the Iniquity of the Father, nor shall the Father bear the Iniquity of the Son, but the Soul that sins shall die.* Upon which I conclude, that this Practice and Injunction lays an heavier Yoke, than God hath laid, upon the Neck of Posterity. But I pass on to the next Reason for the abrogating this Day, which is usher'd in by and not unlike the former, viz,

VII. That

VII. *THAT not only that Generation is gone off the Stage, but the Family of the Stewarts is entirely extinct.*

WHILST that Family was upon the Throne, Complaisance to a Sovereign might indulge, tho' not warrant a Practice of this Nature, but being now extinct, and that in a common Way of Providence, I see not the least Shadow of Reason for the further Celebration of it. To what Purpose should the Memory of so ungrateful a Tragedy be transmitted down to Posterity, when the principal Actors suffer'd the utmost Punishments that could be inflicted on them, and that Family who suffer'd those Calamities, is now no more. Are we willing then at last to have our bleeding Wounds closed? Are we willing to have our Animosities remov'd? Are we willing to have our Rents and Divisions made up? Then let us unanimously lay aside all Bitterness and Wrath, all Envy and Malice, and sincerely set our selves to promote Unity and Concord: And this can be effected by no better Way, or more agreeable means, than the removing this Occasion of Scandal out of the Way. I deny not, but this may disoblige a few, and yet but an
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inconsiderable Number of Men amongst us: A Party as contemptible upon more Accounts than one, as well as they are small; a Party that have been as mischievous in their Aims and Intentions, as they have been traiterous and unsuccessful. But, not to launch out further upon so ungrateful a Subject, I shall proceed to another Reason, *viz.*

VIII. *THE Merits of the Cause, if enquir'd into, will not bear it.*

HERE it is presently objected, Was not the King inhumanly murder'd? Did he not die a Martyr for the Church of *England*, and is not this sufficient Cause for celebrating a *Fast*, and observing this Day as holy?

TO this Question I answer, I allow the King was basely murder'd; but Murder does not make a Martyr; for if so, I fear the History of the *British* Kings, whether *English* or *Scottish*, must change its Title, and run thus; *The Martyrology of the Kings of England and Scotland*; for our Catalogue of Kings, at this Rate, would be little short of a Catalogue of Martyrs the most of them descending to their Graves, by violent and untimely Ends: Nay, at this Rate of reckoning, few Kings
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even amongst the *Pagans* could have miss'd of this honourable Character, and the worst of Men, tho' they had liv'd like Devils all their Days, if they make their Exit at this Door, might claim the Privilege and the Profit too; for Heaven is the Entail of Martyrdom, and would in a short Time be peopled with the Scum of Hell. We need not go far back for Examples of Princes who have left the World by a violent Death, or been suspected so to do, but confine our selves to the Family of the *Stewarts*, and that whilst on the *English* Throne. To begin therefore with King *James* I. He was not only suspected by the Populace, but even by the Parliament to have been poison'd by a Powder, and the black Plaister, that were administred to him by the Duke of *Buckingham*: His eldest Son Prince *Henry* was poyson'd past all Doubt, as appears by the Judgment of the Surgeons who dissected him: And as his Second Son, King *Charles* I. dy'd by the Ax, so his Grandson King *Charles* II. was suspected to have his Dismission by Poison; insomuch, that when he lay upon his Death-Bed, a great Lord who came out of the King's Chamber, being ask'd, how his Majesty did, reply'd, they had oil'd and greas'd his Boots, and fitted him for his Journey; reflecting not only on their having thrust
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the consecrated Host down his Throat, but intimating the Occasion of his Death too. Nor could his Brother, commonly call'd the *Good Duke of Glocester*, escape the same Fate.

THAT Kings and great Men have, for Ages long since past, ended their Lives by violent Deaths is apparent from History, and that of *Juvenal* is as plain to the Purpose, as Words can make it,

*Ad generum Cereris sine cade & vulnere
pauci
Descendant Reges, & sicca morte Tyranni.*

So that 'tis evident, not the Death, but the Cause makes a Martyr. The Word in the Original Signification implies no more than a *Witness*, but by common Use and Acceptation is confin'd to that narrow Compass, to denote a *Witness*, who bearing his Testimony to the Truths of the Gospel seals it with his Blood: Nor is it, at this Day, ever taken in a larger Sense. This Name therefore is not in the least applicable to King *Charles's* Case, against whom, not one Article, referring to Religion, was objected, but Matters purely relating to the State. For tho' he might, in common Discourse, at that Day, be reflected on as being *Popish-ly*

ly affected, by his Enemies, or at least as a Favourer of *Papists*, yet this was never objected against him in his publick Charge, but only Matters of State, *viz.* his extending his Prerogative, and oppressing the People by Loans, Privy Seals, Ship-money, High Commission-Court, Starchamber, *cum multis aliis, quæ nunc prescribere longum est.* And tho' I had Time, yet should I not like the Office of raking in the Ashes of the Dead, especially Princes, on purpose to expose their Faults, which I wish heartily might rather sink into eternal Oblivion, together with the Memory and Observation of this Day, that so it might no more administer Ground of Disputes amongst us. And I could wish with all my Soul, that that unhappy Prince had not so far follow'd the Advice of the hair-brain'd High-Church Party of those Times, who neither regarding the King's, or the People's Interest, engag'd him in those pernicious and illegal Practices; or that after he had been involved and intangled by them, he had had so much Mercy and Compassion for himself and People, as to have deliver'd over to publick Justice those traiterous Counsellors, who had put him upon these Practices, so pernicious and detrimental to the Publick, and so ruinous to himself. But I shall add no more, being

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ing unwilling to launch out farther into so ungrateful a Discourse. Now from what has been said, I think 'tis manifest that he was no Martyr, neither for Jesus Christ, nor yet for the Church of *England*, tho' a Martyr for the Church of *England* is a new Species, of which I never met yet with any Mention in Scripture, nor in History. But suppose he was a Martyr, if every Martyr of Rank that has suffer'd in *England* was to mark our Calender with a red Letter, and furnish our Church with a *Fast*, we should be oblig'd to keep a perpetual *Lent* from the First of *January* to the Last of *December* inclusive. By this small Sketch 'tis too visible there were Faults on both Sides, and all true Lovers of their Country cannot but wish that the Remembrance of them, especially by this *Fast*, was entirely taken away. But if so be it must be continu'd, it cannot but be highly convenient, that the present Prayers for that Day were cashier'd, and others more suitable for those who had neither Heart nor Hand in that Affair, were appointed in their Stead; that so the People might not LIE unto God, nor revile one another, to the no small Prejudice of his present Majesty's Interest, by dividing the People into Faction, which brings me to the last Reason I shall offer for the abrogating this Day, viz.

IX. That

IX. *THAT hereby the Interest of his Majesty is wonderfully weakened and impair'd:*

AND certainly, if ever, *Britain* has now the greatest Reason to unite all its Powers for the publick Good : We are but just come out of a long and expensive War, nor are we yet throughly secur'd of the Continuance of the Peace : We have Enemies abroad, who, tho' newly reconcil'd, are not over-hastily to be trust-ed, 'till they have given us better Proofs of their Fidelity, than they have ever yet done : The Pretender is not far from *France*, nor yet from *Britain*, and has, 'tis to be fear'd, too many Friends in this I-land : If there were no Apprehensions of Danger from that Quarter, to what purpose was the Proclamation founded on an Act of Parliament, offering an 100000 *l.* Reward to any that should apprehend him if landed, or attempting to land in any of his Majesty's Dominions ? These Considerations loudly call upon us to unite against all Attempts that may be made to disturb the Peace and Tranquillity of His Majesty's auspicious Government : That so our Enemies, whether foreign or domestick, may meet with a Disappointment in all their Endeavours to divide and weaken us. And seeing the Obser-

vation of this Day has been so great an Advantage to that factious Tory-Party, who have too plainly prov'd themselves to be in the Pretender's Interest, it must be certainly to his Majesty's Service, and the Quiet of the People, to wrest so dangerous and troublesome a Weapon out of their Hands, as the Observation thereof is.

NO Man's Memory can be so short, or his Conversation so little, but that he may know and remember, how high that Crew carried themselves in a late Reign, casting the greatest Odium and Contempt upon the preceding Ministry, so that it was scarce safe to mention them with any Mark of Honour or Esteem : And since his Majesty's happy Accession, that those worthy Patriots are restor'd to the publick Management, the Murmurings and Reflections of these Sons of Dissension have been as plentiful. These are the Men, who endeavour to divide the People amongst themselves, and from his Majesty, and this Day is their principal Market, wherein the Priests of that Factious Herd, call'd *High-Church*, do so much disturb the publick Peace and Tranquility ; the Composition of whose Sermons on this Day is the Language of Hell,
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huddled up together in the greatest Confusion, as void of Coherence as Charity or Christianity, and the Intent of them to break their Neighbours into Parties, and set them together by the Ears ; and whether this be not a weak'ning of his Majesty's Interest by thus alienating the People one from another, is too evident to need any Proof, it being the natural Tendency thereof : And as 'tis a weak'ning of his Majesty's Power, so is it a lessening of the publick Credit. I shall go no further back than the last four Years of the late Queen's Reign : When this *High-Church* Party got the Ascendant, by whispering into her Royal Ears, that the *Low-Church* Party, as they call'd them in Ridicule, were endeavouring to subvert her Majesty's Hereditary Title, that so being settled only on the Foot of the *Revolution*, she might be made the Creature of the People, and then they might serve her at their Pleasure, as they did her Royal Grandfather, if she answer'd not their Ends ; and as this was insinuated into her Majesty, so 'twas thunder'd from the Pulpit ; and in common Conversation it was the main Topick, on which the whole Tenour^t of their Discourses ran : Nothing was then to be heard but 41, horrible Murder, flagrant and diabolical Rebellion,

on, Schismatical, Republican, Antimonarchical, and such like Stuff, whereby People were kindled into Rage and Inveteracy one against another ? And pray what was the Effect of all this ? Publick Stocks sunk at a prodigious Rate ; Trade dwindled and declin'd for a while, and then gave up the Ghost : And to so poor an Ebb was National Credit come, that Parliamentary Security could not induce People to trust their Money in the Governments Hands ; and I believe few will offer to deny this, when 'tis plain, the last publick Fund did not fill, notwithstanding all Endeavours that could be used, till after his Majesty's Happy Accession to the Throne.

AND here I shall take my Leave of the Reader, and submit the foregoing Arguments to his serious Examination ; and laying aside all Partiality, let every Rational Man consider, how far the abrogating this Day may be a Furtherance of Unity, Peace and Concord amongst the People, and a means of supporting and strength'ning his Majesty's Throne, by uniting the Hearts of all his Subjects in Love towards each other, and in Loyalty and Affection towards his Person and Government ; that hereby his Majesty's Reign
may

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may become the more beneficial to these Kingdoms, and easy and glorious to himself, and the Crown descend with Safety, notwithstanding the restless Endeavours or *Machiavel* Contrivances of his Enemies, to his latest Posterity.

F I N I S.

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